



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

September 18, 2008

TO: Superintendents, Principals, Business Managers, Charter School Administrators, Title I Directors, Special Education Directors, Testing Coordinators, Technology Coordinators and Public Information Officers

FROM: Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Weekly E-Newsletter

IN THIS REPORT:

- **Superintendent Luna Remarks on Possible Budget Shortfall**
- **Superintendent Luna Appoints RtI Coordinator**
- **Information on ASVAB**
- **Superintendent's Schedule**
- **What's New**
- **Reminders**
- **Upcoming Deadlines**

SUPERINTENDENT LUNA REMARKS ON POSSIBLE BUDGET SHORTFALL (GO TO TOP)

Governor Otter informed state agencies this week that he may announce a temporary reduction of spending authority, or a holdback, for the Fiscal Year 2009 due to a reduction in projected General Fund revenue. A holdback has not yet been announced, but the Governor requested state agencies to prepare in the event of a 1-percent holdback, 2-percent holdback or 2.5-percent holdback.

"Idaho's public schools are fortunate that if a budgetary holdback does occur, local schools in Idaho would be held harmless because any financial shortfall would be covered by the Public Education Stabilization Fund. I am grateful to the Idaho Legislature for having the foresight to create this fund in 2003 and then to deposit \$100 million into it in 2006 to help deal with tough economic times like we are experiencing today," Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said. "Even though the Public Schools Budget will not be impacted this year, I still urge local school districts and school board members to look at every dollar currently being spent and to ensure that we are spending every taxpayer dollar efficiently and effectively, especially during these tough economic times."

For more information on the Governor's announcement, please visit <http://www.dfm.idaho.gov/> under the "What's New" section.

SUPERINTENDENT LUNA APPOINTS RTI COORDINATOR (GO TO TOP)

Superintendent Luna hired Nancy Thomas-Price to serve as the Response to Intervention (RTI) Coordinator at the State Department of Education.



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Response to Intervention is a national model that provides a systematic approach to making sure that all children are reaching their potential. It is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need and monitoring progress frequently to make important decisions about how instruction or goals may need to change. As RtI coordinator, Thomas-Price will lead a 30-member leadership group and work closely with districts, schools and programs at the Department, especially those in Student Achievement and School Accountability.

Thomas-Price has 28 years of experience as an educator, with a strong background in special education and curriculum. Before joining the Department, Thomas-Price served as a consulting teacher for the Caldwell School District where she provided technical assistance to Caldwell schools as the district implemented RtI. She has hit the ground running since starting in her new position in August, pulling together a Statewide Master Plan for RtI implementation and support. Among the goals of that plan are to work closely with other programs that overlap with RtI, to oversee the delivery of staff development in a unique way, and to improve parent and community involvement in the RtI process.

Please feel free to contact RtI Coordinator Nancy Thomas-Price at (208) 332-6979 or NThomasPrice@sde.idaho.gov.

INFORMATION ON ASVAB (GO TO TOP)

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) program is one way we can help students identify a future career path. The ASVAB program is a comprehensive career exploration and planning program that includes a multiple-aptitude test battery, interest inventory and various career planning tools designed to help the student explore the world of work. The program, which is free of charge, is a great way for students to see the options they have after high school and learn more about the further education or training they need to pursue a particular career.

More than 150 schools in Idaho participate in the ASVAB program every year. Under the program, high school, sophomores, juniors and seniors take an exam to determine their strengths and weaknesses. The test scores will be interpreted for the students and a follow-up interest inventory is offered. Their aptitudes and interests are interfaced to assist them in making career choices. The ASVAB can be given any time during the year. Results are sent to the school within two weeks. ASVAB representatives are on hand after the results are released to offer additional assistance to school counselors and students.

Idaho schools have used the ASVAB results in innovative ways. Some students across the state are using the ASVAB program to complete their senior projects.

Please consider using ASVAB in your school or school district. For more information, you can contact: David Hodson, at (208) 334-1450 ext. 213 or david.a.hodson@mepcom.army.mil or Colleen Owen at (208) 334-1450 ext.214 or colleen.owen@mepcom.army.mil.

Schools in Northern Idaho, north of New Meadows should call Fred Bernize at (509) 353 3105 ext. 242 or fred.bernize@mepcom.army.mil

SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHEDULE (GO TO TOP)

Office Location
650 West State Street

Telephone
208-332-6800

Speech/Hearing Impaired
1-800-377-3529

Fax
208-334-2228



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

- Superintendent Luna will attend the Dual Credit Task Force meeting from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, September 23 in Boise.

WHAT'S NEW (GO TO TOP)

- **Reminder: Teacher of the Year deadline** – The deadline to submit nominations for the Idaho Teacher of the Year to the State Department of Education is **September 30, 2008**. All materials must be mailed, faxed or e-mailed to the Department by that date. Please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/teacher_of_year/ to download application materials. Please note that the Idaho Teacher of the Year application is the same as the application for the National Teacher of the Year.
- **School Garden Grant available** – Grants of between \$1,500 to \$3,000 are available to schools that want to implement school fruit/vegetable gardens to teach nutrition and other school curriculum. Studies show school gardens can have a positive impact on students' food choices as well as provide an opportunity to provide hands on learning in many curricular areas. These grants are funded by Team Nutrition grants from the State Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs. Any Idaho school participating in the USDA's National School Breakfast or Lunch Program is eligible. The application can be completed by anyone connected with a school, including foodservice, teachers, administrators, parents, or community members. For more information or to apply, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/>. Applications are due **October 10, 2008**. If you have questions, please contact Heidi Martin, Child Nutrition Coordinator, at (208) 332-6827 or HCMartin@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Credit for Special Olympics course** – Northwest Nazarene University (NNU) is offering graduate credit for all educators who teach the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games K-12 curriculum, which is being mailed to all public and private Idaho schools the week of September 22, 2008. The course is Ed 550 Education to Make a Difference. This course is designed as a learning team, essentially an independent study where educators teach a series of three concise and engaging K-12 lessons about valuing diversity through involvement with the Special Olympics. To register, please visit <https://www.nnu.edu/cereg>.
- **Safe Routes to School funding** – The Idaho Transportation Department has announced the availability of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Section 1404 funds for FY2011 Safe Routes to School (SR2S) programs, which provides \$1 million a year in federal funds for infrastructure and non-infrastructure combined SR2S projects in Idaho. Projects **may** include engineering solutions, and **must** include education, enforcement, encouragement and evaluation efforts. Eligible applicants may be state or local governmental and/or non-profit organizations. The deadline for the SR2S Letters of Intent to Apply is **October 20, 2008**. Awards will be announced and successful applicants will be notified by March 31, 2009. For more information, visit www.itd.idaho.gov/srts/howtoapply.html. If you have questions, contact the Idaho Safe Routes to School Program Coordinator at (208) 334-4475.
- **2008-09 Love Your Veggies Grants available** – Elementary schools can apply for a chance to receive one of ten \$15,000 grants from the makers of Hidden Valley® Salad Dressings. Each grant award will support an elementary school in developing a program offering fresh vegetables and fruits lasting through the 2009-10 school year. Each school grant will consist of \$15,000 in direct funding, and a one-time donation of Hidden Valley® Original



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Ranch® Light Dressing. Funding must be spent on any of the following: Fresh produce, a vegetable station, kitchen equipment, program staffing, nutrition education supplies and/or training. All proposals must be submitted online at www.LoveYourVeggiesGrants.org by 5 p.m. EST on November 7, 2008.

- **NNU offers Spanish for working professionals** – Northwest Nazarene University Center for Professional Development will offer “Introduction to Spanish for the Working Professional.” This course is designed to introduce working professionals to the fundamentals of cross-cultural communication and will establish strong speaking, reading, listening and writing skills in Spanish. Upon completion, participants will have functional language skills allowing students to comprehend questions and formulate logical responses to essential questions they may face in diverse workplaces. Online registration and more information can be found at www.nnu.edu/pdcourses or by calling (208) 467-8495.
- **Poetry Out Loud competition** – The Idaho Commission on the Arts invites Idaho high school teachers of English, speech, or dram to enter their students in the statewide Poetry Out Loud competition, which will culminate in a state final on February 21, 2009 in Boise. Poetry Out Loud was created by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation and is administered by the state art agencies of all 50 states. Until October 15, 2008, the Idaho Commission on the Arts will accept entries from high schools statewide that fax their commitments to the Commission at (208) 334-2488 or e-mail intern@arts.idaho.gov.
- **Early Years 2008 conference** – The Early Years 2008 conference will be held November 18-19, 2008 at Boise State University for parents and early childhood professionals from an array of disciplines. The conference will highlight the many interrelated aspects of growth that impact a child’s development. For more information or to register, please visit www.idahochild.org.
- **Division of Purchasing News** – The contract with Graybar Electric (SBPO1255) for Dry Cell Batteries expires this month and will not be renewed. Batteries are available under our current contract with WW Grainger for industrial and janitorial supplies contract #PADD1019-01; therefore, a separate contract is not required. Please contact Grainger for your battery purchases, mandatory after September 20, 2008. Here is a link to the current WW Grainger contract: <http://adm.idaho.gov/purchasing/contracts/Tools/PADD1019-01.pdf>. Please contact the Division of Purchasing at (208) 327-7465 if you have questions or visit <http://adm.idaho.gov/purchasing/>.
- **Urban School Award** – The National Center for Urban School Transformation is now accepting applications for the National Excellence in Urban Education Award. The award recognizes the dedication and talent of urban school educators and students, provides a benchmark of excellence that motivates reform efforts and deepens the knowledge base of best practices for promoting urban school transformation. For more information or to apply, please visit <http://www.ncust.org>. Applications are due **November 14, 2008**.
- **Photography Contest** – The Idaho State Historical Society invites Idaho students to participate in a digital photography to recognize Idaho Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month. Idaho Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month will highlight the work of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in Idaho. The submitted image should show a WPA project, demonstrate the success of the WPA, speak to the magnitude of the WPA, and/or illustrate its importance in Idaho. The competition is open to Idaho high school and college students. The deadline to apply is **October 29, 2008**. Awards include cash prizes. For more information, please visit www.idahohistory.net or contact Shelby Day at (208) 334-3847 ext. 109 or shelby.day@ishs.idaho.gov.



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

REMINDERS (GO TO TOP)

- **Update District Contact Information** – With the start of a new school year, we at the State Department of Education want to ensure important communications from the Department are reaching you! Please help us by updating your school district's information in the Idaho District Contact Information (IDCI) database at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/data_collection.htm. The Department uses the information in this database to distribute all important memos, letters and other communications, including this Weekly E-Newsletter, which serves as the Department's primary communication source with schools and school districts. If you need assistance updating your information in IDCI, please refer to a step-by-step instruction guide posted on this Web page.
- **Holiday Card Contest** – Each year, the State Department of Education sponsors a Holiday Card contest to draw attention to art programs in Idaho's elementary schools. One drawing is selected for the Department's holiday greeting. The child who submits the selected artwork receives cards for his or her own use. The winning entry for each grade also receives a certificate. This art contest is a very special tradition here at the State Department of Education, and we all look forward to continuing the tradition this year and seeing examples of elementary school children's art on display. Please visit www.sde.idaho.gov and click on "Holiday Card Contest" under the Latest News heading to learn more. If you have questions, please contact Melissa McGrath, the Department's Public Information Officer, at (208) 332-6818 or MRMcGrath@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Public Education (K-12) Funding Study** – The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee (JLOC), an equally divided bipartisan committee of the Idaho Legislature, has directed the nonpartisan Office of Performance Evaluations (OPE) to study adequacy issues in K-12 public education funding. One of the key objectives of this study is to identify and understand current adequacy issues from the stakeholder's perspective. A project scope is available online at www.idaho.gov/oep/. For more information, please contact Rakesh Mohan or Jeff Shinn (team lead) at rmohan@ope.idaho.gov or jshinn@ope.idaho.gov. Please note: OPE is currently conducting two education studies. This study is being conducted independent of the second, Feasibility of School District Services Consolidation.
- **Science, Math and Technology competition** – eCYBERMISSION is a Web-based science, math and technology competition for 6th through 9th grade teams. Winning students receive a U.S. EE Savings Bonds. The competition fits easily into classroom curriculum by introducing students to the scientific method and how to apply it in real-life situations in their communities. Students from 96 teams are awarded regional and national prizes between \$2,000 and \$8,000 each year. For more information and to register (using the codeword **CHALLENGE**), go to www.ecybermission.com.
- **Project Learning Tree workshops** – Project Learning Tree (PLT)/Idaho is offering a semester of professional development opportunities for teachers. Each workshop is available for one graduate level professional education credit (for recertification and pay-scale movement) from a choice of universities – \$60. To enroll, send \$20 workshop fee per workshop (NOTE: Focus on Lit is \$25) to PLT at 350 N 9th St., #304, Boise ID 83702. Indicate the workshop(s) you wish to attend, and provide your contact information. We'll send you a memo with workshop details. Visit <http://www.idahoforests.org/plt1.htm> to see a full list of workshops.



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

- **Curricular Materials Caravan** – The Curricular Materials Caravan will start traveling throughout the state in October for newly approved math and professional-technical education materials. Please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/meetings_events/ to learn more and to view dates and locations of the Caravan.
- **Coordinated School Health workshops** – The Coordinated School Health team at the State Department of Education, in conjunction with the Idaho Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (IAHPERD), is presenting three professional development workshops on Health and Physical Education on October 1-4, 2008. To register, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/csh/>.
- **Integrated Pest Management Workshop** – The Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) is sponsoring two workshops related to the use of pesticides in urban situations with emphasis on schools and other public properties. These free workshops will be held in Idaho Falls on September 23 and in Caldwell on September 25. Pre-register for the Idaho Falls workshop with Jase Rumsey at (208) 525-7158 or Bob Hays at (208) 332-8610 (Boise). Register with Bob Hays for the Caldwell workshop.
- **America's Legislators Back to School Program** – America's Legislators Back to School Program gives elected officials in Idaho the opportunity to meet personally with their young constituents and to answer questions, share ideas, listen to concerns and impart a greater understanding of the legislative processes necessary for developing knowledgeable citizens. The program is available throughout the school year. Contact Idaho State Coordinator, Jeannine Wood at jwood@senate.state.id.us or (208) 332-1309, to participate.
- **Accreditation trainings** – The Idaho Northwest Accreditation Association will be hosting regional administrator trainings during the month of September. These meetings will be hosted by your Regional Northwest Accreditation Committee Members and Coordinators. For a full listing of dates, times and locations in each region, please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/meetings_events/. If you have any questions, or for more information, please contact Cheryl Charlton, Idaho NAAS Executive Secretary, at execsec@northwestaccreditation.org or by calling (208) 830-1777.
- **Introduction to Service Learning** – The State Department of Education's Learn and Serve program is hosting a Webinar about service learning from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. (MT) on October 2, 2008 and 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. (MT) on October 3, 2008. To access the session, please visit http://67.202.210.70/launcher.cgi?room=SDE_Innovation. The Webinar is open to anyone interested in service learning for grades K-12. If you have questions, please contact Learn and Serve Coordinator Cheryl Kary at (208) 332-6913 or CMKary@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Secretary of State offers opportunity for 17-year-old students** – In Idaho, if a student is 17 years old and a U.S. citizen, they can serve as a poll worker on Election Day. Please visit <http://www.idahovotes.gov/Clerk.htm> to find out how you can contact your local county clerk and ask for more information. Student poll workers are paid for their time.
- **Register for School Improvement webinars** – Webinars are available for Title I schools and districts that have been identified for school improvement Alert, Year 1, Year 2, Corrective Action, or Restructuring based on the Spring 2008 ISAT scores. Please visit <http://csi.boisestate.edu/sessionregistration.htm> to register or to learn more. If you have questions, please contact Katherine Weatherspoon at the (208) 426-4852.



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

- **DMA Trainings** – The State Department of Education has scheduled Direct Math Assessment (DMA) trainings this fall for school district and school building testing coordinators and teachers. There is no additional charge for your district to attend the trainings. For more information or to register, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/math/> and download the registration form. Please e-mail or fax your application to Sarah Bluemont at sbluemont@sde.idaho.gov or (208) 334-2228.
- **2008 Idaho Student Mock Election** – Secretary of State Ben Ysursa invites your high school to participate in the 2008 Idaho Student Mock Election. This online voting exercise has been developed in cooperation with the State Department of Education to instill an appreciation and importance of voting in Idaho's young people. The goal of the program is to provide an active voting experience for high school students across the state. Any high school government class is welcome to participate by using school computers during the mock election. The 2008 Idaho Student Mock Election will be available for two days only: Thursday, October 23 and Friday, October 24. For more details, please visit <http://www.sos.idaho.gov/isme/ISMEIndex.jsp>. To participate, please e-mail a list of interested teachers and their school email addresses to isme@sos.idaho.gov or contact the SOS directly at (208) 334-2852.

UPCOMING DEADLINES (GO TO TOP)

- **Sept. 19, 2008** – The deadline to register for the Charter Start! 101 workshop, which is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on September 24, 2008 in the Barbara Morgan Conference Room at the State Department of Education offices. The workshop was created last year to provide hands-on technical assistance for all new charter developers and any individual or group interested in a public school conversion. If you have questions, please contact Lori Howard at LAHoward@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Sept. 23, 2008** – The deadline to nominate a teacher for the 2008 Micron Outstanding Idaho Science Teacher Awards by the Department of Physics at Idaho State University. To download a nomination form, please visit <http://www.physics.isu.edu/aapt/nomform.htm>. Each teacher selected will receive a cash award of \$250 and a plaque honoring their commitment to science education. The awards will be presented at the 2008 Idaho Science Teachers Association annual meeting in October.
- **Sept. 25, 2008** – The deadline to register for the Idaho Energy Workshop for Teachers, which will give Idaho teachers the unique opportunity to learn information and hands-on activities to teach students about wind energy, wind generated electricity, solar energy and photovoltaics. The workshop will be held October 2-3, 2008 in Idaho Falls. Idaho teachers Thanks to a generous contribution from the Idaho National Laboratory, the workshop is **free** to teachers on a first-come, first-served basis. Visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/science/> to download to register. If you have questions, please contact Rebecca Lamb at rlamb@need.org or 800-875-5029.
- **Sept. 25, 2008** -- The deadline to submit Alternative Authorization – Teacher to New Certificate requests. If you have questions, please contact Cina Oravez at (208) 332-6936 or CLOravez@sde.idaho.gov. Please submit complete application packets to Cina Oravez, Alternative Authorization Coordinator, prior to this date. You can mail applications to:
State Department of Education
ATTN: Cina Oravez
PO Box 83720



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Boise, ID 83720-0027

Boise, ID 83720-0027

- **Sept. 30, 2008** – The deadline to submit the FICA Match Report for the 2007-2008 school year. This covers July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. The cover letter and the report form are available online at www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/statistics_finance.htm. Completed reports should be faxed to Ken Lang at (208) 334-2228. If you wish to e-mail the report, send it to KPLang@sde.idaho.gov, but please remember to include the required signature. If you have any questions, please contact Ken Lang at (208) 332-6858 or KPLang@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Sept. 30, 2008** – The deadline to submit nominations for Idaho Teacher of the Year to the State Department of Education. Applications for the 2009 Idaho Teacher of the Year are now available on the State Department of Education's Web site at www.sde.idaho.gov/TeacheroftheYear. Please note that the Idaho Teacher of the Year application is the same as the application for the National Teacher of the Year.
- **Oct. 15, 2008** – The deadline for school districts to submit the Annual Title I-A Comparability Report. This is an annual requirement for all Districts. The forms can be found at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/title_one/#annual_reports and must be submitted as email attachments and sent to Susan Hansen at SCHansen@sde.idaho.gov. Minor changes have been made to the forms; if there are questions please contact Susan at (208) 332-6900.
- **Oct. 31, 2008** – The deadline for school districts and charter schools to submit the 2007-2008 IFARMS Annual Financial Report as required by Idaho Code 33-701(7). The IFARMS Annual Financial Report forms and supporting documents can be found at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/finance_tech/ifarms_forms.htm. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Oberle at (208) 332-6840 or JAOberle@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Oct. 31, 2008** – The deadline to submit materials for the U.S. Senate Youth Program. Each year, two outstanding student leaders from Idaho are selected as delegates to the program where they will travel to Washington, D.C. with all expenses paid and view their federal government in action, meet with national leaders on Capitol Hill, at the White House, the Supreme Court, the Pentagon and the State Department. Each student also receives a one-time \$5,000 undergraduate college scholarship from the William Randolph Hearst Foundation. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda Salazar at (208) 332-6974.
- **Nov. 3, 2008** – The deadline to submit applications for the third annual BubbleWrap® Competition for Young Inventors, sponsored by the Sealed Air Corporation and The National Museum of Education. The contest is open to students in grades 5-8. This innovative contest incorporates national and state academic standards in the fields of engineering design, problem-solving, entrepreneurship and all of the core curricular subjects. Visit www.nmoe.org for more details about the competition. Applications may be received via hard copy mail, email or FAX. If you have further questions, please contact the National Museum of Education at info@nmoe.org or (330) 376-8300.
- **Nov. 10, 2008** – The deadline for school districts and charter schools to submit the 2007-2008 Independent Audit Report. Idaho Code 33-701(6), which requires submission of the independent audit report, was modified during the 2008 Legislative Session. Not only was the due date changed from October 15 to November 10, but penalties for late submission were also added. If the SDE has not received your report on or before November 10, your



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

November 15 foundation payment may be withheld until the report is received. Please work with your auditor and school board to ensure submission prior to November 10. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Oberle at (208) 332-6840 or JAOberle@sde.idaho.gov.

- **Nov. 28, 2008** – The deadline to enter into the Council for America's First Freedom's 16th annual First Freedom Student Competition. The competition is a national essay contest that offers students in grades 9-12 an opportunity to compete for a \$3,000, \$1,500 or \$750 award as they examine the First Amendment and the history and relevance of religious freedom in America and the world today. For more information on this competition, please visit www.firstfreedom.org. Registration is due by Monday, November 24, 2008, and the postmark entry deadline is November 28, 2008.
- **Jan. 30, 2009** – The Idaho Dropout Summit has been scheduled at the Nampa Civic Center in Nampa. More details to come.